

Newburgh, NY - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today congratulated six students upon their graduation from the Newburgh Youth Build, joining them to celebrate completion of a year long renovation project, which transformed a blighted building at 6 Federal Street in Newburgh into a three-unit transitional housing facility for low-income Habitat for Humanity families. Hinchey secured \$210,000 in the fiscal year 2009 budget for the program designed to engage young people from 17 to 24 years of age in a GED completion program and impart skills needed to obtain future employment in the trades. Youth Build was a joint venture of Habitat Newburgh, Best Resources, and the Laborers' Local #17.

"This shows what a community can do when it comes together," said Hinchey. "Today these six young people have acquired the skills and experience they need to find good jobs. Countless families will benefit from the new transitional housing units they helped to renovate, and it was all made possible through the hard work of Habitat for Humanity of Newburgh, Best Resources and the Laborers' Local #17. I was very pleased to secure federal funding for this project because the value to this community could not have been more clear. The community will benefit from this facility for years to come and the skills gained by these hard-working students will serve them well in their careers and lives. I'm so proud of everything we have accomplished."

Hinchey thanked the board and staff of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh for their dedication and strong leadership in implementing the project, directly recognizing President Maureen Crush, Executive Director Cathy Collins, and former Executive Director Deirdre Glenn.

All of the participants completed general classes provided by the Laborer's Local 17. These classes included: ladder safety, traffic control, scaffold building, fire safety, site maintenance, and construction math. In September, three of the participants went on to complete certificates in the following areas: NYS Asbestos Handler, EPA Renovator, General Construction, Scaffold User, Scaffold Builder, new OSHA Signal Person, Traffic Control, Forklift, Mason Tending, OSHA 10, Hilti, Landscape, and Welding.

GED classes were provided by Best Resources. Two participants passed their GEDs, one has taken his GED and is awaiting his results, and two are still working on their GED. One of the participants has enrolled in Orange County Community College starting in the spring.

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh builds homes and strengthens community in Newburgh. Habitat Newburgh is dedicated to providing decent, affordable housing in partnership with local, hard-working families in need. Reaching across religious, cultural, and racial boundaries, Habitat strives to restore a sense of community with the common goal of strong neighborhoods and dignity through homeownership. To date, Habitat Newburgh has built 43 safe, decent and affordable houses in one of the most distressed urban areas in the United States. Over 225 children and adults now call these houses home, and the homes in the City of Newburgh's assessed property values have increased by over \$8.3 million.